اِنَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ يَهْدِيْ لِلَّتِيْ هِيَ اَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ يَعْمَلُوْنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ اَجْرًا كَبِيْرًا

Quran English Translation and Tafseer
Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi
Surah 54 – Al Qamar (The Moon)

سُوْرَةُ الْقَمَرِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

(In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate)

اِقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَانْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ ١

(54-1) The Hour of Resurrection drew near and the moon split asunder. (1)

(1) That is, the splitting of the Moon asunder is a portent that the Hour of Resurrection of which you are being foretold, has drawn near at hand, and the order of the universe has begun to be disrupted. Moreover, the incident that a great sphere like the moon has split into two distinct parts is a specific proof of the fact that Resurrection of which you are being forewarned can take place. Obviously, when the Moon can split, the earth can also split, the orbits of the stars and planets can also change and the whole system of the heavens can also be disturbed. There is nothing eternal and everlasting and stable here so that Resurrection may be improbable.

Some people have taken this sentence to mean: The Moon will split. Although according to Arabic usage it is possible to take this meaning, the context clearly rejects it. In the first place, if this were the meaning, the first sentence would become meaningless. If the moon had not actually split at the time when this revelation was made, but it was going to split sometime in the future, it would be absurd to say on the basis of this that the Hour of Resurrection had approached near at hand. After all, how can an incident that is to take place in the future, be regarded as a sign of Resurrection’s being near at hand, and how can such a testimony be put forward as a rational argument? Second, with this meaning in mind when we read the following verses, they appear to be altogether incoherent. The verses that follow clearly

show that the people at that time had witnessed a sign that was a manifest portent of the possibility of Resurrection, but they rejected it as a magical illusion, and persisted in their belief that Resurrection was not possible. In this context, the words inshaqq-al-Qamar can be meaningful only if they are taken to mean: The moon split asunder. If they are taken to mean: The moon will split asunder, the entire following theme becomes disjointed. It will look like this:

The Hour of Resurrection has drawn near and the moon will split asunder. Yet whatever sign these people may see, they turn away and say: This is current magic! They have denied and followed only their own lusts.

Therefore, the truth is that the incident of the splitting of the moon is confirmed explicitly by the words of the Quran and it is not dependent upon the traditions of the Hadith. However, the traditions supply its details, and one comes to know when and how it had taken place. These traditions have been related by Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ahmad, Abu Uwanah, Abu Daud Tayalisi, Abdur Razzaq, Ibn Jarir, Baihaqi, Tabarani, Ibn Marduyah, and Abu Nuaim Tsfahani with many chains of transmitters on the authority of Ali, Abdullah bin Masud, Abdullah bin Abbas, Abdullah bin Umar, Hudhaifah, Anas bin Malik and Jubair bin Mutim. Three of these authorities, viz, Abdullah bin Masud, Hudhaifah, and Jubair bin Mutim state that they were the eye-witnesses of this event; two of them cannot be its eye-witnesses, for this event took place before the birth of one (i.e. Abdullah bin Abbas) and at a time when the other (i.e. Anas bin Malik) was yet a child. But since both these scholars were companions, obviously they must have reported this event after they had heard it from the aged companions who had direct knowledge of it.

The information that one gathers from the various traditions is that this incident occurred about five years before the Hijrah. It was the 14th night of the lunar month; the moon had just risen when it suddenly split and its two parts were seen on either side of the hill in front. Then after a moment or so they rejoined. The Prophet (peace be upon him) at that time was at

Mina. He told the people to mark it and be witnesses to it. The disbelievers said that Muhammad (peace be upon him) had worked magic on them; therefore, their eyes had been deceived. The other people said: Muhammad could have worked magic on us but not on all the people. Let the people from other places come, we shall ask them if they also had witnessed this incident. When the people from other places came, they bore evidence that they also had witnessed the same phenomenon.

Some traditions which have been related from Anas give rise to the misunderstanding that the incident of the splitting of the moon had happened twice. But, in the first place, no one else from among the companions has stated this; second, in some traditions of Anas himself also the words are marratain (twice), and in some firqatain and shaqqatain (two pieces); third, the Quran mentions only one incident of the moon's splitting asunder. The correct view therefore is that this incident happened only once. As for the stories which are current among the people that the Prophet (peace be upon him) had made a gesture towards the moon and it split into two parts and that one part of the moon entered the breast of the garment of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and went out of the sleeve, have no basis whatsoever.

Here, the question arises: What was the real nature of this incident. Was it a miracle that the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed on the demand of the disbelievers of Makkah as a proof of his Prophethood? Or, was it only an accident that occurred on the moon by the power of Allah and the Prophet (peace be upon him) had only called the peoples' attention to it and warned them to mark it as a sign of the possibility and nearness of Resurrection? A large group of the Muslim scholars regards it as among the miracles of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and holds the view that it had been shown on the demand of the disbelievers. But this view is based only on some of those traditions which have been related from Anas. Apart from him no other companion has stated this. According to Fath al Bari, Ibn Hajar says: Apart from the narration by Anas, in no other narration of this story have I come across the theme that the incident of the splitting of the moon had taken place on the

demand of the polytheists. (Bab Inshiqaq al-Qamar). Abu Nuaim Isfahani has related a tradition on this subject in Daleil an-Nubuwwat, on the authority of Abdullah bin Abbas also, but it has a weak chain of transmitters and none of the traditions that have been related with strong chains of transmitters in the collections of Hadith on the authority of Abdullah bin Abbas, contains any mention of this. Furthermore, neither Anas nor Abdullah bin Abbas was a contemporary of this incident. On the contrary, none of the companions, from among Abdullah bin Masud, Hudhaifah, Jubair bin Mutim, Ali, Abdullah bin Umar, who were contemporaries of the incident, has stated that the pagans of Makkah had demanded a sign from the Prophet (peace be upon him) to testify to his Prophethood on which he might have shown the miracle of the splitting of the moon. Above all, the Quran itself is also presenting this event not as a sign of the Prophethood but as a sign of the nearness of Resurrection. However, this was indeed conspicuous proof of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) truthfulness because it testified to the news that he was giving to the people of the coming of Resurrection.

The critics raise two kinds of objections against it. In the first place, they say it is impossible that a great sphere like the moon should split asunder into two distinct parts, which should get hundreds of miles apart and then rejoin. Secondly, they say if it had so happened, it would be a well known event in the world and would have found mention in the books of History and Astronomy. But, in fact, both these objections are flimsy. As for the discussion of its possibility, it could perhaps find credibility in the ancient days but on the basis of what man has come to know in the present day about the structure of the planets, it can be said that it is just possible that a sphere may burst because of its internal volcanic action and its two parts may be thrown far apart by the mighty eruption, and then may rejoin under the magnetic force of their center. As for the second objection, it is flimsy because the event had taken place suddenly and lasted a short time only. It was not necessary that at that particular moment the world might be looking at the moon. There was no explosion either that might have attracted the people's attention; there was no advance information of it that the people might be awaiting its

occurrence and looking up at the sky. It could not also be seen everywhere on the earth but only in Arabia and the eastern lands where the moon had risen and was visible at that time. The taste and art of writing history also had not yet developed so that the people who might have witnessed it, should have made a record of it and then some historian might have gathered the evidence and preserved it in some book of History. However, in the Histories of Malabar mention has been made of a native ruler who had witnessed this phenomenon that night. As for the books of Astronomy and Calendars, this event might have been mentioned in them only if the event had affected the movement of the moon, its orbit and the times of its rising and setting. As no such thing happened, it did not attract the ancient astronomers' attention. The observatories were also not so developed that they might have taken notice of everything happening in the heavens and preserved a record of it.

وَ اِ ن یَّرَوا اٰیَ ۃً یُّ عۡرِضُ ا وَ یَقُوۡلُ ا سِحۡرٌ مُّسۡتَمِرٌّ ﴿۲﴾

(54-2) (Regardless of any Signs these people see), they turn away and say: "This is an ongoing sorcery." (2)

(2) The words sihr-um mustamirr of the text can have several meanings:

(1) That, God forbid, this magical illusion also is one of those magical performances that Muhammad (peace be upon him) has been performing day and night.

(2) That this certainly is a work of magic which has been performed with great expertise.

(3) That just as other works of magic have passed, so will this also pass without leaving any lasting effect behind.

وَ کَذَّبُ وۡۤا وَ اتَّبَعُوۡۤا اَ ہۡوَآءَہُمۡ ؕ وَ کُلُّ اَ مۡرٍ مُّسۡتَقِرٌّ ﴿۳﴾

(54-3) They also gave the lie to (the splitting asunder of the moon) and only followed their desires. [3] Yet everything is destined to reach an end. [4]

(3) That is, they still persisted in the same decision that they had made of denying the Hereafter and have not changed their mind even after having witnessed this manifest sign, mainly because it clashed with their desires of the flesh.

(4) That is, it cannot be so endlessly that Muhammad (peace be upon him) should go on inviting you to the truth while you persist in your falsehood stubbornly and his truth and your falsehood should never be established. All affairs ultimately have to reach an appointed end. Likewise, inevitably this conflict between you and Muhammad (peace be upon him) has also to reach an end. A time will certainly come when it will be clearly established that he had been in the right and you in the wrong throughout. Likewise, the worshipers of the truth shall one day see the result of their worshiping the truth and the worshipers of falsehood of their worshiping the falsehood.

وَ لَقَ جَآءُم مِّنَ لۡاَنۡبَآءِ مَا فِيۡ هُ دَجَرٌ۴

(54-4) Surely there came to them narratives (of the ancient nations) that should suffice to deter (them from transgression),

حِ كۡمَ بَالِغَ ةٌ فَمَا تُ غۡنِ النُّذُرُ ۵

(54-5) narratives that are full of consummate wisdom. But warnings do not avail them.

فَتَوَلَّ عَ نۡهُم يَ وۡمَ يَ دۡعُ الدَّاعِ اِلٰى شَىۡءٍ نُّكُرٍ ۶

(54-6) So turn away from them, (O Prophet). [5] On the Day when a caller shall call them to a thing most terrible, [6]

(5) In other words, leave them to themselves. When every effort has been made to make them understand the truth in the

most rational ways, when instances have been cited from history to show them the evil results of the denial of the Hereafter, when the dreadful fates suffered by the other nations in consequence of their rejecting the Prophetic messages have been brought to their notice and yet they are disinclined to give up their stubbornness, they should be left alone to gloat over their follies. Now, they would believe only when after death they arise from their graves to see with their own eyes that the Resurrection of which they were being forewarned and exhorted to adopt the truth, had actually taken place.

(6) Another meaning can be “an unknown thing”, a thing which they never could imagine, of which they never had any concept and no idea whatever that it also could occur.

خُشَّعًا اَبصَارُهُم يَخرُجُونَ مِنَ الاَجدَاثِ كَاَنَّهُم جَرَادٌ مُّنتَشِرٌ ۙ٧

(54-7) with down-cast eyes [8] they shall go forth from their graves, [7] as though they were scattered locusts. [9]

(7) "Graves" do not signify only those pits in the earth in which a person might have been properly buried, but he would rise up from wherever he had died, or from wherever his dust lay, on the call of the Caller to the plain of Resurrection

(8) Literally: Their looks will be downcast. This can have several meanings:

(1) That they will appear terror-stricken.

(2) That they will be reflecting disgrace and humiliation, for as soon as they arise out of their graves they would realize that it was indeed the same second life which they had been denying, for which they had made no preparation, and in which they would have to present themselves before their God as culprits.

(3) That with awe-struck looks they would be watching the dreadful scenes before them, from which they would not be able to avert their eyes.

(9) That is, they denied that the Hereafter has to take place when man will have to render an account of his deeds; they denied the Prophethood of the Prophet who was making his people aware of this truth; and they denied the teaching of the Prophet, which taught them what to believe and what creed and conduct they should adopt in order to pass the reckoning of the Hereafter.

مُّهۡطِعِيۡنَ اِلَى الدَّاعِ ؕ يَقُوۡلُ الۡكٰفِرُوۡنَ هٰذَا يَوۡمٌ عَسِرٌ ۝٨

(54-8) They shall be hurrying forth towards the caller, and the unbelievers (who had once denied this Day), will say: “This is a woeful Day.”

كَذَّبَتۡ قَبۡلَهُمۡ قَوۡمُ نُوۡحٍ فَكَذَّبُوۡا عَبۡدَنَا وَقَالُوۡا مَجۡنُوۡنٌ وَّازۡدُجِرَ ۝٩

(54-9) Before them Noah's people also gave the lie (to his Message). (9) They rejected Our servant as a liar, saying: “He is a madman”; and he was rebuffed. (10)

(9) That is, they denied that the Hereafter has to take place when man will have to render an account of his deeds; they denied the Prophethood of the Prophet who was making his people aware of this truth; and they denied the teaching of the Prophet, which taught them what to believe and what creed and conduct they should adopt in order to pass the reckoning of the Hereafter.

(10) That is, the people not only belied the Prophet but also branded him as a madman; they uttered threats against him, showered him with curses and abuses; and did whatever possibly they could to stop him from preaching the truth, and thus made life extremely difficult for him.

فَدَعَا رَبَّهٗۤ اَنِّیْ مَغْلُوْبٌ فَانْتَصِرْ ﴿۱۰﴾

(54-10) Then he called upon His Lord: “Verily I am vanquished; so come You to my aid.”

فَفَتَحْنَاۤ اَبْوَابَ السَّمَآءِ بِمَآءٍ مُّنْهَمِرٍ ﴿۱۱﴾

(54-11) Thereupon We opened the gates of the sky for water to pour down,

وَّ فَجَّرْنَا الْاَرْضَ عُیُوْنًا فَالْتَقَى الْمَآءُ عَلٰۤى اَمْرٍ قَدْ قُدِرَ ﴿۱۲﴾

(54-12) and We made the earth burst forth with springs, (11) and all this water converged to fulfil that which had been decreed.

(11) That is, the earth so burst forth with springs at the command of Allah that it was no longer earth but presented a scene of the springs all around.

وَ حَمَلْنٰهُ عَلٰى ذَاتِ اَلْوَاحٍ وَّ دُسُرٍ ﴿۱۳﴾

(54-13) And We bore Noah on the vessel built of planks and nails, (12)

(12) This signifies the Ark which the Prophet Noah had built under Allah’s care and guidance even before the coming of the Flood.

تَجۡرِي بِأَعۡيُنِنَا جَزَآءً لِّمَن كَانَ كُفِرَ ١٤

(54-14) which sailed on under Our supervision: a reward for him who had been shown ingratitude. (13)

(13) Literally: This was a vengeance for the sake of him whose kufr had been committed. If kufr be taken in the sense of denial, it would mean: Whose message had been denied and rejected; and if it is taken in the meaning of ingratitude for a blessing, it would mean: Who was indeed a blessing for the people, but had been ungratefully rejected.

وَلَقَد تَّرَكۡنَٰهَآ ءَايَةٗ فَهَلۡ مِن مُّدَّكِرٖ ١٥

(54-15) And We left the Ark as a Sign. (14) Is there, then, any who will take heed?

(14) It may also mean: We left this dreadful punishment as a sign of warning, but in our opinion the preferable meaning is that the Ark was left as a sign of warning. Its resting and existence on a high mountain continued to warn the later generations of the wrath of God for thousands of years and kept on reminding them how the people who had disobeyed God on this earth had met their fall, and how the believers had been rescued from it. Imam Bukhari, Ibn Abi Hatim, Abdur Razzaq and Ibn Jarir have related traditions on the authority of Qatadah saying that at the time the Muslims conquered Iraq and al-Jazirah, this Ark still existed on Mount Judi (and according to a tradition, near the settlement of Baqirda), and the early Muslims had seen it. In the modern times also some people during their flights in the airplanes have sighted an Ark-like object on a peak in this region, which is suspected to be the Ark of Noah, and on the basis of the same, expeditions have been sent from time to time to search it out. (For further details, see (E.N. 47 of Surah Al-Araf); (E.N. 46 of Surah Hud), and (E.N. 25 of Surah Al-Ankabut).

فَكَيۡفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ١٦

(54-16) So how awesome were My chastisement and My warnings!

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مُدَّكِرٍ ﴿١٧﴾

(54-17) We have made this Qur'an easy as a reminder. (15) Is there, then, any who will take heed?

(15) Some people have misconstrued the words yassarnal-Quran to mean that the Quran is an easy Book; no knowledge is required to understand it so much so that a person even without the knowledge of the Arabic language, can write a commentary on it, and can deduce any injunctions he likes from its verses independent of the Hadith and Islamic Law, whereas the context in which these words occur, indicates that they are meant to make the people realize this: One means of the admonition are the dreadful torments that descended upon the rebellious nations, and the other means is this Quran, which guides you to the right path by argument and instruction. Obviously, this means of admonition is by far the easier one; then, why don't you take advantage of it and insist on meeting with the torment instead? It is indeed Allah's bounty that He has sent this Book through His Prophet and is warning you that the ways you are following lead only to destruction and your well-being lies only in following this way. This method of admonition has been adopted so that you are rescued even before you fall into the pit of destruction. Now, who could be more foolish than the one who does not believe in the admonition and realizes his error only after he has fallen into the pit.

كَذَّبَتۡ عَادٌ فَكَيۡفَ كَانَ عَذَابِىۡ وَ نُذُرِ ﴿۱۸﴾

(54-18) 'Ad also gave the lie (to Hud). So how awesome were My chastisement and My warnings!

اِنَّاۤ اَرۡسَلۡنَا عَلَيۡهِمۡ رِيۡحًا صَرۡصَرًا فِىۡ يَوۡمِ نَحۡسٍ مُّسۡتَمِرٍّ ﴿۱۹﴾

(54-19) We sent a tumultuous wind against them on a day of unremitting misfortune, (16)

(16) That is, on a day the ill omen of which continued to rage for several days. In Surah Ha Mim As-Sajdah, Ayat 16, the words are: fi ayyam in nahisat, in a few ill-omened days, and in (Surah Al-Haqqah, Ayat 7), it has been said: This wind storm continued to rage for seven nights and eight days. It is said that the day on which the storm started was Wednesday. From this the idea spread that Wednesday was a day of ill-luck, and no work should be started on this day. Some very weak traditions also have been cited to support this view, which have further strengthened the idea that this day is ill-omened. For example, there is Ibn Marduyah and Khatib al-Baghdadi's tradition that the last Wednesday of the month is ill-omened, the ill-omen of which is endless. Ibn Jauzi regards this tradition as fabricated and Ibn Rajab as unauthentic. Hafiz Sakhavi says that all the methods through which this tradition has been reported, are weak. Likewise, Tabarani's tradition (Wednesday is a day of perpetual ill-luck) also has been declared as weak by the scholars of Hadith. In some other traditions one is also forbidden to start a journey, to do business transactions, to pare the nails, or to visit the sick on a Wednesday. They also say that leprosy starts on this day. But all these traditions are weak and these cannot be made the basis of any belief. The scholar Munawi says: To abandon Wednesday, taking it as ill-omened and to entertain the astrologer's whims in this regard is forbidden, strictly forbidden. For, all days belong to Allah. no day is beneficial by itself nor harmful. Allama Alusi says: All days are equal, Wednesday has no peculiarity about it. There is no hour in the night or day which might be good for one person and bad for another. It is Allah Who creates favorable conditions for some people and adverse for others.

تَنزِعُ النَّاسَ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ مُّنقَعِرٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

(54-20) which tore people away and hurled them as though they were trunks of uprooted palm-trees.

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ﴿٢١﴾

(54-21) So how awesome were My chastisement and My warnings!

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

(54-22) We have made the Qur'an easy to derive lessons from. Is there, then, any who will take heed?

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِالنُّذُرِ ﴿٢٣﴾

(54-23) Thamud gave the lie to the warnings,

فَقَالُوا أَبَشَرًا مِّنَّا وَاحِدًا نَّتَّبِعُهُ إِنَّا إِذًا لَّفِي ضَلَالٍ وَسُعُرٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

(54-24) saying: “Are we to follow a single mortal, [17] one from among ourselves? If we do that, we shall surely be in error and folly.

(17) In other words, there were three reasons for their refusal to obey and follow the Prophet Salih:

(1) He is a human being and not a super-human person so that we may regard him as superior to ourselves.

(2) He is a member of our own nation, he is in no way superior to us.

(3) He is a single man, one from among ourselves. He is not a prominent chief with a large following, or an army of soldiers. Or a host of attendants so that we may acknowledge his superiority. They wanted that a Prophet should either be a

superman, or if he be a common man, he should not have been born in their own land and nation, but should have descended from above, or sent from another land, and if nothing else, he should at least have been a rich man, whose extraordinary splendor should make the people believe why Allah had selected him alone for the leadership of the nation. This same was the error of ignorance in which the disbelievers of Makkah were involved. They also refused to acknowledge the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a Prophet on the basis that he was a man who moved about in the streets like the common men, had been born among them only the other day and now was claiming that God had appointed him as a Prophet.

ءَاُلۡ قِیَ الذِّکۡرُ عَلَیۡ ہِ مِنۡۢ بَیۡنِنَا بَلۡ ہُوَ کَذَّابٌ اَشِرٌ ﴿۲۵﴾

(54-25) Was there none but he to whom the Reminder could be vouchsafed excluding all others? Nay; he is an insolent liar.” (18)

(18) The word ashir of the original means a conceited, insolent person given to bragging of his own superiority over others.

سَیَعۡلَمُوۡنَ غَدًا مَّنِ الۡکَذَّابُ الۡاَشِرُ ﴿۲۶﴾

(54-26) (We told Our Messenger): “Tomorrow they shall know who is the insolent liar.

اِنَّا مُرۡسِلُوا النَّاقَۃِ فِتۡنَۃً لَّہُمۡ فَارۡتَقِبۡہُمۡ وَاصۡطَبِرۡ ﴿۲۷﴾

(54-27) We shall send the she-camel as a trial for them; so watch their end with patience.

وَ نَبِّئۡہُمۡ اَنَّ الۡمَآءَ قِسۡمَۃٌۢ بَیۡنَہُمۡ ۚ کُلُّ شِرۡبٍ مُّحۡتَضَرٌ ﴿۲۸﴾

(54-28) Let them know that the water should be divided between them and the she-camel, each availing their turn.” (19)

(19) This explains the verse: We are sending the she-camel as a trial for them. The trial was that suddenly a she-camel was produced before them and they were told that one day she would drink the water all by herself and the next day they would be allowed to have water for themselves and their cattle. On the day of her turn neither would any of them himself come to any of the springs and wells to take water nor bring his cattle for watering. This challenge was given on behalf of the person about whom they themselves admitted that he had no army and no hosts to support him.

فَنَادَوۡا صَاحِبَهُمۡ فَتَعَاطٰى فَعَقَرَ ﴿۲۹﴾

(54-29) Eventually, they summoned their companion, and he undertook the (outrageous) task and hamstrung the she-camel. (20)

(20) These words by themselves indicate that the she-camel roamed at will in their settlements for a long period of time. No one could dare approach a source of water on the day of her turn. At last, they called out to a haughty chief of theirs who was well known for his courage and boldness, and urged him to put an end to her. Emboldened by the false encouragement, he took up the responsibility and killed the she-camel. This clearly means that the people were very frightened. They felt that she had extraordinary power, and so they dared not touch her with an evil intention. That is why the killing of a mere she-camel especially when the Prophet who had presented her, did not possess any army that could be a deterrent for them, amounted to undertaking a dangerous and difficult task. (For further details. see (E.N 58 of Surah Al-Araf) and (E.Ns 104. 105 of Surah Ash-Shuara).

فَكَيۡفَ كَانَ عَذَابِىۡ وَنُذُرِ ﴿۳۰﴾

(54-30) So how awesome were My chastisement and My warnings!

اِنَّاۤ اَرۡسَلۡنَا عَلَيۡهِمۡ صَيۡحَةً وَّاحِدَةً فَكَانُوۡا كَهَشِيۡمِ الۡمُحۡتَظِرِ ﴿۳۱﴾

(54-31) Behold, We sent a single Blast against them, and they became like the trampled twigs of a sheep pen-builder. (21)

(21) The crushed and rotten bodies of the people of Thamud have been compared to the trampled and trodden twigs and pieces of bush lying around an enclosure for cattle.

وَلَقَدۡ يَسَّرۡنَا الۡقُرۡاٰنَ لِلذِّكۡرِ فَهَلۡ مِنۡ مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿۳۲﴾

(54-32) Surely We have made this Qur'an easy as a reminder. Is there, then, any who will take heed?

كَذَّبَتۡ قَوۡمُ لُوطٍۭ بِالنُّذُرِ ﴿٣٣﴾

(54-33) Lot's people also gave the lie to the warnings,

اِنَّاۤ اَرۡسَلۡنَا عَلَيۡهِمۡ حَاصِبًا اِلَّاۤ اٰلَ لُوۡطٍ ؕ نَجَّيۡنٰهُمۡ بِسَحَرٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

(54-34) and behold, We let loose upon them a tempest which rained stones upon them, except upon Lot's household whom We rescued in the last hours of the night

نِّعۡمَةً مِّنۡ عِنۡدِنَا ؕ كَذٰلِكَ نَجۡزِىۡ مَنۡ شَكَرَ ﴿٣٥﴾

(54-35) as a favor from Us. Thus do We reward those who give thanks.

وَلَقَدۡ اَنۡذَرَهُمۡ بَطۡشَتَنَا فَتَمَارَوۡا بِالنُّذُرِ ﴿٣٦﴾

(54-36) Surely Lot warned his people that We shall seize them (with Our chastisement), but they doubted the warnings.

وَلَقَدۡ رَاوَدُوۡهُ عَنۡ ضَيۡفِهٖ فَطَمَسۡنَاۤ اَعۡيُنَهُمۡ فَذُوۡقُوۡا عَذَابِىۡ وَنُذُرِ ﴿٣٧﴾

(54-37) Then they even solicited his guests from him, whereupon We blotted out their eyes, (telling them): “Now have a taste of My chastisement and My warnings.” (22)

(22) The details of this story have been given in (Surah Hud, Ayats 77-83) and (Surah Al-Hijr, Ayats 61-74), a resume of which is as follows: When Allah decided to punish those people with a torment, He sent a few angels in the guise of handsome boys as guests in the house of the Prophet Lot (peace be upon him). When the people saw such handsome guests in Lot’s house, they rushed to it and demanded that they be handed over to them for the gratification of their lust. The Prophet Lot implored them to desist from their evil intention, but they did not listen and tried to enter his house

to take hold of the guests forcibly. At this stage suddenly their eyes were blinded. Then the angels told Prophet Lot (peace be upon him) that he and his household should leave the city before dawn; then as soon as they had left a dreadful torment descended on the people. In the Bible also this event has been described. The words are: And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door. But the men (i.e. the angels) put forth their hand and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door. (Gen. 19: 9-11).

وَ لَقَدۡ صَبَّحَهُمۡ بُكۡرَةً عَذَابٌ مُّسۡتَقِرٌّ ﴿۵۴-۳۸﴾

(54-38) Indeed an abiding chastisement came upon them in the morning.

فَذُوۡقُوۡا عَذَابِىۡ وَ نُذُرِ ﴿۳۹﴾

(54-39) So have a taste of My chastisement and My warnings.

وَ لَقَدۡ يَسَّرۡنَا الۡقُرۡاٰنَ لِلذِّكۡرِ فَهَلۡ مِّنۡ مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿۴۰﴾

(54-40) Surely We have made this Qur'an easy as a reminder. Is there, then, any who will take heed?

وَ لَقَدۡ جَآءَ اٰلَ فِرۡعَوۡنَ النُّذُرُ ﴿۴۱﴾

(54-41) Warnings also came to the Pharaonites,

كَذَّبُوۡا بِاٰيٰتِنَا كُلِّهَا فَاَخَذۡنٰهُمۡ اَخۡذَ عَزِيۡزٍ مُّقۡتَدِرٍ ﴿۴۲﴾

(54-42) but they gave the lie to Our Signs, to all of them. Thereupon We seized them with the seizing of the Most Mighty, the Most Powerful.

اَكُفَّارُكُمۡ خَيۡرٌ مِّنۡ اُولٰٓئِكُمۡ اَمۡ لَكُمۡ بَرَآءَةٌ فِى الزُّبُرِ ﴿۴۳﴾

(54-43) Are your unbelievers (of Makkah) any better than they? (23) Or have you been granted any immunity in the Scriptures?

(23) The address here is directed to the Quraish, as if to say: When the other nation have been punished for adopting disbelief and showing stubbornness and denying the truth, why would you not be punished if you adopted the same attitude and conduct. For, you are not a special people in any way.

اَمۡ يَقُوۡلُوۡنَ نَحۡنُ جَمِيۡعٌ مُّنۡتَصِرٌ ﴿۴۴﴾

(54-44) Or do they say: “We are a strong legion, strong enough for victory?”

سَيُهۡزَمُ الۡجَمۡعُ وَ يُوَلُّوۡنَ الدُّبُرَ ﴿۴۵﴾

(54-45) Soon shall this legion be routed and shall turn their backs and flee. (24)

(24) This is a specific prophecy that was made five years before the hijrah, saying that the hosts of the Quraish who waxed proud of their strength would soon be put to rout by the Muslims. At that time no one could imagine how such a revolution would take place in the near future. Such was the helplessness of the Muslims that a group of them had already left the country and taken refuge in Habash and the rest of the believers lay besieged in Shiab Abi Talib, and were being starved by the Quraish boycott and siege. Under such conditions no one could imagine that only within next seven years the tables were going to turn. A pupil of Ahdullah bin Abbas has related that Umar used to say: When this verse of Surah Al-Qamar was sent down. I wondered what hosts it is that would be routed. But when in the Battle of Badr the pagan Quraish were routed and they were fleeing from the battlefield, I saw the Messenger of Allah in his armor rushing forward and reciting this verse: Sa-yuhzam-al -jamu yuwallun-ad-dubur. Then only did I realize that this was the defeat that had been foretold. (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim).

بَلِ السَّاعَةُ مَوۡعِدُهُمۡ وَ السَّاعَةُ اَدۡهٰى وَ اَمَرُّ ﴿۴۶﴾

(54-46) Nay; the Hour of Doom is their appointed time, and the Hour shall be more calamitous and bitter.

اِنَّ الۡمُجۡرِمِيۡنَ فِىۡ ضَلٰلٍ وَّ سُعُرٍ ﴿۴۷﴾

(54-47) The evil-doers are victims of error and madness.

يَوۡمَ يُسۡحَبُوۡنَ فِى النَّارِ عَلٰى وُجُوۡهِهِمۡ ؕ ذُوۡقُوۡا مَسَّ سَقَرَ ﴿۴۸﴾

(54-48) There shall come a Day when they will be dragged on their faces into the Fire and will be told: “Now taste the flame of Hell.”

اِنَّا كُلَّ شَىۡءٍ خَلَقۡنٰهُ بِقَدَرٍ ﴿۴۹﴾

(54-49) We have created everything in a determined measure. [25]

(25) That is, nothing in the world has been created at random but with a purpose and destiny. A thing comes into being at an appointed time, takes a particular form and shape, develops to its fullest extent, survives for a certain period, and then decays and dies at an appointed time. Even according to this universal principle this world too has a destiny in accordance with which it is functioning till an appointed time and will come to an end at an appointed tune. It will neither come to an end a moment earlier than its appointed time of end nor survive a moment longer; it has neither existed since eternity nor will exist till eternity, nor is it the plaything of a child which he may destroy as and when he likes.

وَ مَاۤ اَمۡرُنَاۤ اِلَّا وَاحِدَةٌ كَلَمۡحٍۭ بِالۡبَصَرِ ﴿۵۰﴾

(54-50) Our command consists of only one Word which is carried out in the twinkling of an eye. [26]

(26) That is, We shall not have to make any lengthy preparations for bringing about Resurrection, nor will it take long to come. For no sooner will a command be issued forth from Us, it will take place in the twinkling of an eye.

وَ لَقَدۡ اَهۡلَكۡنَاۤ اَشۡيَاعَكُمۡ فَهَلۡ مِّنۡ مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿۵۱﴾

(54-51) We did indeed destroy many like you. [27] Is there, then, any who will heed?

(27) That is, if you think that the world is not the kingdom of a Wise and Just God but the lawless empire of a blind ruler, in which man may behave and conduct himself as he likes, without any fear of accountability, history is proof and an eye-opener for you, which shows that the nations that adopted such a way of life, have been sent to their doom, one after

وَ كُلُّ شَىۡءٍ فَعَلُوۡهُ فِى الزُّبُرِ ﴿۵۲﴾

(54-52) All their deeds are recorded in the Scrolls;

وَ كُلُّ صَغِيۡرٍ وَّ كَبِيۡرٍ مُّسۡتَطَرٌ ۝٥٣

(54-53) everything large or small, is duly inscribed.
(28)

(28) That is, these people should not be under the delusion that whatever they did in the world has become extinct; nay, they should know that full record of the deeds of every person, every group and every nation lies preserved and it will be presented before them at the appropriate time.

اِنَّ الۡمُتَّقِيۡنَ فِىۡ جَنّٰتٍ وَّنَهَرٍ ۝٥٤

(54-54) Surely those who shun disobedience will dwell amidst Gardens and running streams

فِىۡ مَقۡعَدِ صِدۡقٍ عِنۡدَ مَلِيۡكٍ مُّقۡتَدِرٍ ۝٥٥

(54-55) where they will be honorably seated in the presence of a King, Mighty in Power.